

Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 6-8 remain pending in the application, with Claims 1 and 8 being independent. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6 and 8 have been amended herein. Support for the changes to the independent claims can be found at least in Fig. 1 and in the specification at page 6, lines 3-11 and at page 8, line 22 to page 9, line 1. No new matter is believed to have been entered.

The Office Action indicated that the substitute specification filed October 6, 2003, has not been entered because the marked-up copy has not been supplied. Applicants believe the marked-up copy was submitted with the last response, but are including a copy thereof herewith for the Examiner's convenience. Favorable consideration and entry of the substitute specification are requested.

Claims 1, 2 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,851,566 (Potjer et al.). Claims 1, 2, 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over the coating apparatus depicted in Applicants' Fig. 4 in view of Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application No. 10-282329 (Ishimaru et al.). Claims 2 and 6 were rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,958,517 (Poag et al.). Claim 4 was rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,817,441 (Iwata et al.) in view of the apparatus of Fig. 4 and Ishimaru et al. Claims 6 and 7 were rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Potjer et al. in view of Poag et al. Claim 7 was rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable

over Potjer et al. in view of the apparatus of Fig. 4. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As is recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention relates to a coating method of ejecting a coating liquid over the surface of a member to be coated from a slit formed at a coating head and thus forming a coated layer thereon. The method includes the steps of stopping a supply of the coating liquid from a coating liquid supply path to the coating head after ejecting the coating liquid and rinsing an inside of the slit by supplying a rinsing liquid from a rinsing liquid supply path extending to the coating head. The coating liquid supply path is different from the rinsing liquid supply path. The coating head is connected to the coating liquid supply path, a coating liquid supply port for supplying the coating liquid and a rinsing liquid supply port for supplying the rinsing liquid are provided, and the coating liquid supply port and the rinsing liquid supply port are different.

As is recited in independent Claim 8, the present invention relates to a method of rinsing a coating head having a slit for ejecting a coating liquid. The method includes the steps of stopping a supply of a coating liquid from a coating liquid supply path to the coating head after ejecting the coating liquid and supplying a rinsing liquid from a rinsing liquid supply path extending to the coating head. The coating liquid supply path is different from the rinsing liquid supply path. The coating head is connected to the coating liquid supply path, a coating liquid supply port for supplying the coating liquid and a rinsing liquid supply port for supplying the rinsing liquid are provided, and the coating liquid supply port and the rinsing liquid supply port are different.

With the above methods, because the coating liquid supply path and rinsing liquid supply path differ, the working efficiency can be improved significantly. Further, consumption of the coating liquid and rinsing liquid can be minimized.

Referring to Fig. 9 of Potjer et al., the rinsing or cleaning liquid and coating liquid share common supply lines to inlet orifices 69 and 70. It cannot be said, however, that a coating liquid supply port for supplying the coating liquid and a rinsing liquid supply port for supplying the rinsing liquid are provided and the supply ports are different, as is recited in independent Claims 1 and 8.

Thus, Potjer et al. fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in the independent claims.

As recognized by the Examiner, in the coating device of Applicants' Fig. 4, the rinsing liquid supply path and the coating liquid supply path are essentially the same path. Accordingly, this coating device also fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in the independent claims.

In Ishimaru et al., it appears that the ink and penetrant are supplied through a common line to ink jet head 1, and thus do not utilize different supply ports. Accordingly, Ishimaru et al. is not believed to remedy the deficiencies of the citations noted above with respect to the independent claims.

Poag et al. was cited for allegedly teaching the pulsing of cleaning fluid. Iwata et al. was cited for teaching a method of manufacturing a color filter substrate. However, these citations are not believed to remedy the deficiencies of the citations noted above with respect to the independent claims.

Thus, independent Claims 1 and 8 are patentable over the citations of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the §§ 102 and 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 1 and 8. Dependent Claims 2, 4, 6 and 7 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

This Amendment After Final Rejection is an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, and is believed to clearly place this application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicants earnestly believed that the prior Amendment placed the subject application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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